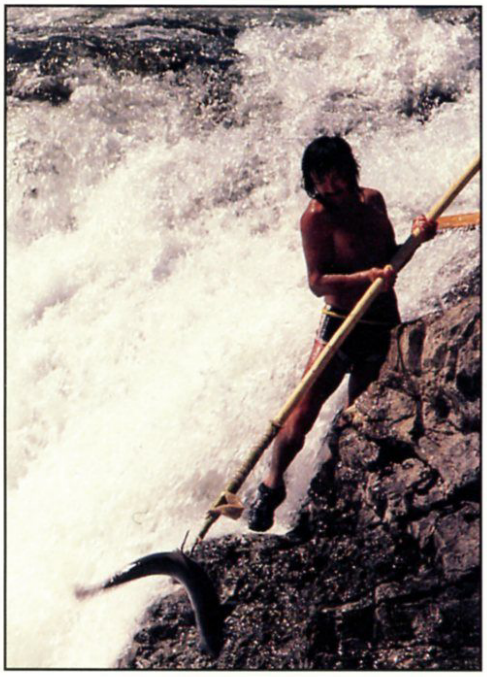
The Pacific Salmon Treaty

A Treaty at Risk Puts Salmon at Risk

Renewed cooperation between Canada and the United States is essential to protecting salmon.

Canada



Salmon have great cultural and economic significance for indigenous peoples in both Canada and the United States.

The Pacific Salmon Treaty

Canada and the United States signed the Pacific Salmon Treaty in 1985 after 15 years of negotiation.

The Treaty is based on two principles: conservation and equity.

- The conservation principle obliges each country to prevent overfishing and provide for optimum production.
- The equity principle provides that each country should receive benefits equal to the production of salmon originating in its waters. It means that neither country should catch more than it produces.

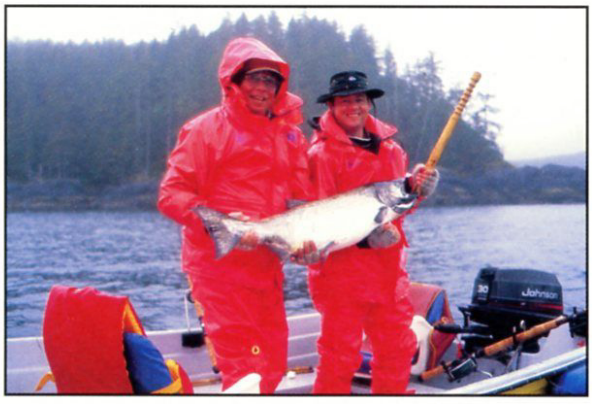
These two principles are linked: conservation requires both countries to protect and rebuild stocks; equity gives a framework for allocating catches.

Unfortunately, the equity principle of the Treaty has not been implemented.

Implementing the Treaty Saves Salmon

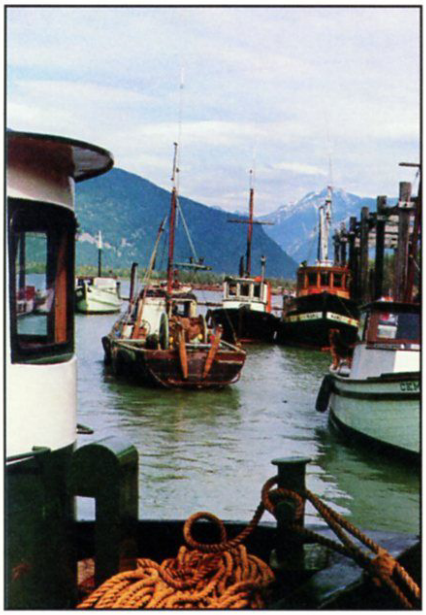
Saving Salmon Saves Jobs

The future of thousands of families and hundreds of small coastal communities from Oregon to Alaska – and large operations in some very big cities, notably Seattle – hangs on the ability of the two nations to find a solution to this crisis.
— Paul Koberstein, Cascadia Times, Portland, Oregon.



Recreational salmon fisheries are enjoyed throughout the coast. They contribute to the life and economy of many communities. Saltwater anglers, owners of sportfishing lodges and marinas, and charter boat operators depend on salmon for their livelihood.

Commercial salmon harvests are the most valuable fisheries on the West Coast. They sustain fishers and processing plant workers in both countries.



The Pacific Salmon Treaty Chronology

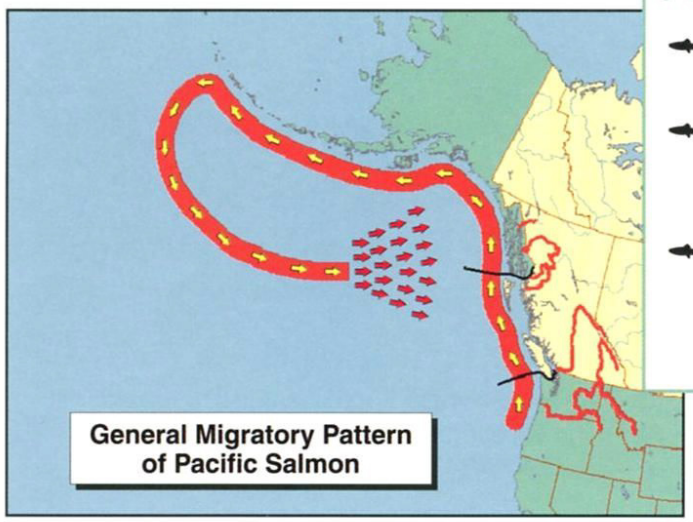
1985
Treaty signed after 15 years of negotiations.

1989
Agreement on interception data for most stocks.

1989 – 1993
Pacific Salmon Commission and government negotiations on equity.

Salmon Interceptions are the Heart of the Dispute

The imbalance in salmon interceptions has increased significantly in the U.S.'s favour since 1985. An agreement on sharing rules is needed to provide the right incentives for conservation and the long-term well-being of the resource.



How Salmon are Intercepted

- Salmon begin their life cycle in fresh water, then migrate to the ocean where they grow and mature.
- After one to seven years at sea, they return to their river of origin to spawn. On their return migration, salmon are often caught in waters outside their country of origin.
- Because many Canadian and U.S. salmon stocks migrate through the same coastal waters, interceptions by both countries are unavoidable, hence the need for fair sharing.

Sockeye *– most valuable species, caught by all commercial gears, four-year life cycle*

Where Salmon are Caught on Their Return Migration

- Salmon stocks migrate together.
- Stocks returning to South East Alaska (shown in red) are only subject to interception in a small area to the south of the Alaska – B.C. boundary.
- Returning Canadian-origin stocks migrate through waters shown in red and purple. They are subject to interception in South East Alaska, in waters south of Vancouver Island, and in Washington State.
- Stocks from Washington and Oregon migrate through waters shown in red, purple and pink. They are subject to interception in Alaska and British Columbia.

1994
U.S. Vice President Gore commits to resolving dispute.

June 1995
Canada proposes mediation of equity principle.

February 1996
Mediation unsuccessful.

April – May 1996
High level discussions by special representatives. Governors pledge political will to resolve dispute.

The Treaty Must be Fully Implemented

Some salmon stocks risk extinction. Others are at record highs. We need the Treaty to protect all salmon species in thousands of individual stocks coastwide.

- Canada and the U.S. need a clear understanding on how to implement the equity principle. A treaty that works ensures sound management and fair sharing of salmon.
- Sharing salmon fairly gives incentive to rebuild stocks and to invest in enhancement.
- An effective agreement on allocation of salmon catches prevents competitive overfishing.
- We *must* work together to sustain the salmon resource. The 1996 Canada – U.S. Sockeye Agreement proves we can.

Chinook *– the largest Pacific salmon species, mainly caught by sport and commercial troll fisheries, lives up to seven years*

What You Can Do to Protect Salmon

- Get the facts on salmon. See our web sites for figures on interception imbalances and other data.
  - *Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade:* http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/geo/usa
  - *Department of Fisheries and Oceans:* http://www.ncr.dfo.ca
- Get others involved!
- Insist that the Treaty be fully implemented before the next fishing season.

Coho *– caught mainly by sport and commercial troll fisheries, usually has a three-year life cycle*

To Express Your Views:

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WWW: http://www.wa.gov/governor/contact.html

Oregon:
Office of the Governor
State Capitol Building
Salem, OR 97310
Tel: (503) 378-4582

Salmon spawning

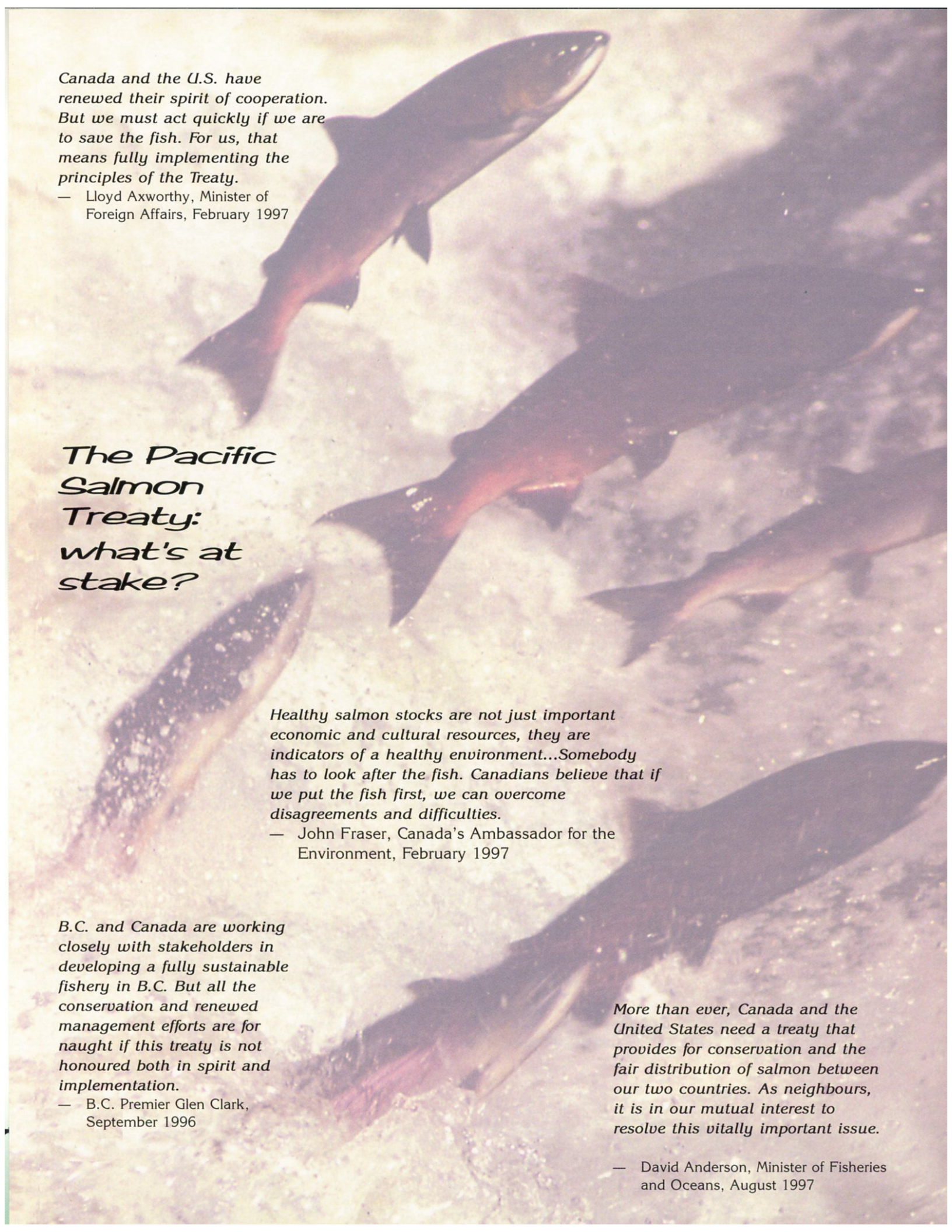
Chum *– caught mainly by commercial net fisheries, has a four-year life cycle*

June 1996
Canada closes directed chinook fisheries. U.S. unilaterally announces 1996 chinook plan. Canada seeks dispute settlement.

Feb-May 1997
Regional stakeholder negotiations make progress but reach impasse.

June 1997
Canada-U.S. negotiations fail. Canada proposes resolution by binding arbitration.

July 1997
U.S. rejects arbitration. Canada and U.S. appoint special representatives to reinvigorate stakeholder process.



Canada and the U.S. have renewed their spirit of cooperation. But we must act quickly if we are to save the fish. For us, that means fully implementing the principles of the Treaty.

— Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs, February 1997

The Pacific Salmon Treaty: what's at stake?

Healthy salmon stocks are not just important economic and cultural resources, they are indicators of a healthy environment...Somebody has to look after the fish. Canadians believe that if we put the fish first, we can overcome disagreements and difficulties.

— John Fraser, Canada's Ambassador for the Environment, February 1997

B.C. and Canada are working closely with stakeholders in developing a fully sustainable fishery in B.C. But all the conservation and renewed management efforts are for naught if this treaty is not honoured both in spirit and implementation.

— B.C. Premier Glen Clark, September 1996

More than ever, Canada and the United States need a treaty that provides for conservation and the fair distribution of salmon between our two countries. As neighbours, it is in our mutual interest to resolve this vitally important issue.

— David Anderson, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, August 1997

Pink Salmon *– small but abundant, low-value species caught mainly by commercial gears, two-year life cycle*

The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC)

- The PSC administers the Treaty, and provides a forum for Canada and the U.S. to deal with bilateral issues on Pacific salmon.
- Every year representatives of all fishing sectors and management agencies from Alaska, British Columbia, Oregon and Washington meet to review past fisheries and negotiate fishing arrangements for the future.
- The objective of these negotiations is to reach agreement on limits to interceptions to ensure conservation of salmon stocks and fair sharing of the catch.
- Scientific and technical committees provide the Commission with essential data on stocks and fisheries.

Steelhead *– prized sport fish, very low abundance, spawns more than once*

For Further Information on the Treaty:

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